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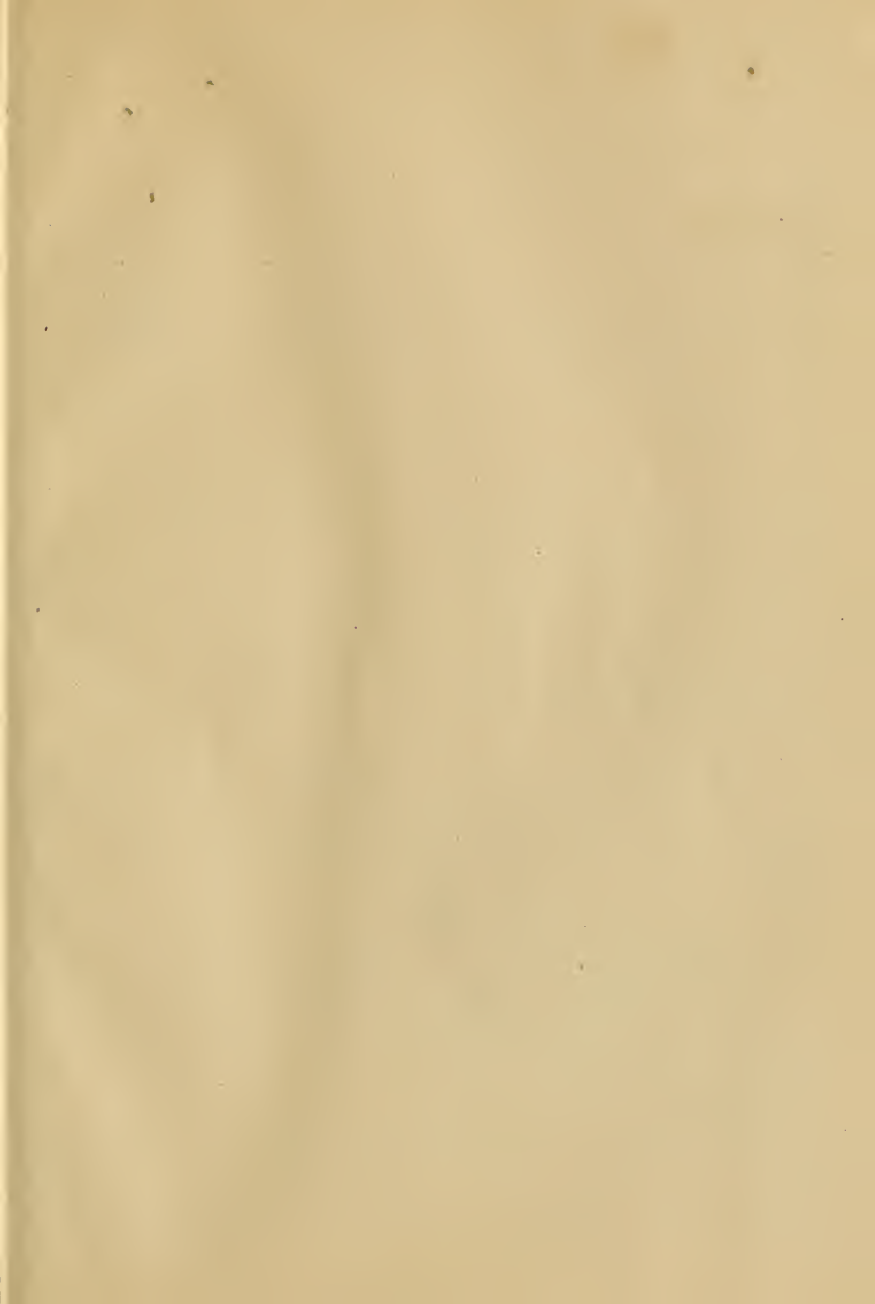
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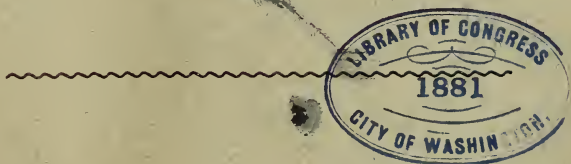
IMPORTANT
SUGGESTIONS AND FACTS

FOR

Christian Professors!

AN ADDRESS ON TEMPERANCE

By WILLIAM BAXTER.



Central Book and Tract Committee of Friends,
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Important Suggestions and Facts

FOR

Christian Professors.



We are met together this afternoon in the interests of the Church. The cause of Temperance is one of the most important outposts of Zion. In the progress of the Church militant there are hindrances to be removed. This work has to be done thro' the instrumentality of the servants of the Lord. Among the many obstacles to the progress of the gospel, the use of and traffic in strong drink are the most formidable. So great a barrier does it present to the moral and spiritual progress of mankind, that some of the most learned among the Jewish rabbis earnestly contend that the serpent which deceived our first parents was the "*serpent of the still.*" And really there would seem to be some force in this position when we remember that the use of strong drink is the greatest source of vice, sensuality, and sin. An eastern fable forcibly illustrates this point. It was enjoined upon a certain person that he should commit one of three crimes. He should himself choose whether it should be getting drunk, stealing, or committing murder. He decided to get drunk, thinking that was the least of the three crimes; but, alas, while drunk, he committed the other two. And thus it is that strong drink is made the father of crime.

The use of and traffic in strong drink to-day are the greatest barriers to the progress of Christianity. The Church claims America for her own. But does Christ? A rapid glance around us will find an answer to sadden the heart, not only of every

Christian but of every patriot. Look in any direction we may, and we see very many who, having the form of godliness, deny the power.

Our country, which, at this moment, should be a land of plenty, order, and virtue, is crowded with paupers, criminals, and an army of police to stand between the vicious and the virtuous. Now I ask, Why is this? Are there no churches erected, no schools open, no ministers to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ? Every one knows that the answer must be—that there are all these, and many more agencies in operation. How is it, then, that in spite of our houses of worship and prayer, of our ministers and teachers, of our schools and most admirable system of education—in spite of all these ameliorating and elevating influences, such depravity exists?

I answer, principally because there is that enormous evil, the drink traffic, established among us, which casts its dread shadow over everything that is lovely and of good report.

Where, I ask, do the great mass of our population, more especially in the larger cities, spend their Sabbath? Certainly not in the houses of worship and prayer. They spend it in the drinking saloon, familiarizing themselves with vice and sensuality of the grossest character.

Some time ago, some Christian young men, in a noted city of the East, watched ten saloons during the Sabbath. What was the result? Just this: that in round numbers, into these ten saloons there went upward of ten thousand men, women, and children!

Now, I leave you to say, whether that is not an explanation of the reason that so few of our population are found clothed and in their right minds sitting at the feet of Jesus? So long as the masses spend their Sabbaths in saloons, there is very little hope of the evangelization of the world. For as Mrs. Wightmen says in her "Haste to the Rescue": "Until the besetting sins of drink and bad companions are given up, men will *not* attend any place of worship."—p. 119. Every experienced city missionary will tell you that drink and the saloon are the great preventives of people being brought under the influence of the gospel.

Then there is another important point. There are those who go to the house of God and yet are not saved. Why? I firmly believe that the grand neutralizer of the gospel is the habit of drinking alcoholic liquors. You ask for my reason. Many could be given, but time will only permit me to give one or two. A sailor said to an earnest laborer in the Lord's vineyard: "When I came to God's house at first, and began to see that things were wrong with me, I determined I would try to be a Christian. I prayed earnestly that God would make me his child, and help me to live as a Christian should. But I did not give up the drink, and I found that, somehow or other, drink and religion did not agree. Then I thought I would try another tack. I gave up the drink, and directly after I found peace with God; and I now find that abstinence and Christianity work well together." A distinguished minister said to Prof. Miller, of Edinboro: "I have never been other than an occasional moderate drinker, but I confess that I have often felt even *that* indulgence to indispose me for religious services. I now very clearly see my duty in this matter. Henceforth I am free from the drinking usages of society—an abstainer."

This experience is strictly in accord with the position the apostle took when he set being "drunk with wine" over against being "filled with the Spirit." The one excludes the other. The two species of influence are antagonistic. As the tendency toward one increases, the tendency toward the other must decrease. No wonder that a certain church office-bearer remarked: "It is a rule with me never to engage in any religious duty after I have been drinking." This statement was made in answer to the inquiry, whether he had engaged in family worship after returning home from a social gathering where wine was one of the entertainments provided for the occasion.

A certain minister spoke to a person who came to him in great distress about his soul's salvation. The minister remarked, "You have been brought up under Methodist influences, haven't you?" "Yes," he replied. "In early life my mother took me to God's house. I have generally been there on the Sabbath, and"—looking at the minister with an expression that bespoke

the reality of his words—"hundreds of times have I trembled and wept as I have listened to sermons, and have resolved that I would be a child of God, but the first glass of wine I took when I got home swept those resolutions away."

This experience holds good of thousands and tens of thousands who go to the house of worship on the Sabbath. The glass or two of liquor after their return home washes away the impression, by narcotizing and deadening their spiritual convictions—and, I fear, in many cases, leaves them further from God than they were before they heard the sermon that impressed them. The sacrilegious priest to whom Richard Baxter went when he was laboring under religious conviction fully understood this. Baxter asked him what he must do to remove the heavy load of sin and guilt which was approaching him. The priest replied, "Drink beer and smoke tobacco!" Yes, my friends, depend upon it, there is no more effectual way to deaden religious conviction and to quench the work of the Spirit upon the heart of man than to drink beer and to smoke or chew tobacco habitually.

The governor of Canterbury jail said in 1867: "The number of prisoners who have been committed to prisons with which I have been connected during the last fifteen years amounts to 22,000. Among them I have come in contact with ministers of the gospel—numbers of persons who were once members of churches, as also children of pious parents, *but I never met with a prisoner being a total abstainer.*" What a significant fact is this for Christian ministers and professors of religion to ponder over!

These, then, are a few illustrations of what I mean by strong drink being a hindrance to the spread of the gospel here in our midst, where the land abounds with churches and ministers.

The use of and traffic in drink are also great hindrances to the spread of the gospel abroad. As I look out on the world, I remember that our divine Master, in his great sacrifice, made full provision for all mankind. I remember also, that, having made provision for the salvation of all, he, with his last words, laid upon his Church the responsibility of sending the glad tidings to all lands and to all people. They were not to leave an island unvisited, nor a human being unwarned. They

were to say of nobody, "He is too low down to be raised up," or "He is too filthy to be cleansed," or "He is too rebellious to be subdued." The command was clear and distinct: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." *Have we obeyed it?* If you look over the world, you will see a few mission-stations shining like fireflies at midnight, and a few islands bright with the smiles of God, but the rest lying in wickedness. I ask, *Why is this?* Is it that there is some political barrier which prevents us from reaching these countries? We used to hear at missionary meetings the prayer that God would open the door to the heathen. We don't hear that prayer now, for the doors are thrown wide open. God has opened the doors more quickly than we have been prepared to enter them. Though more than eighteen hundred years have passed since the Redeemer made his great provision, and commanded us to carry the glad tidings to all; and though in all lands people are crying, "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" how is it, that midnight darkness still rests upon most of the human family? Is it that we do not distinctly perceive our duty? Certainly not. Go to those who are best acquainted with these things, and ask them for an explanation. Their answer will be, that their efforts are frustrated by the "fire-water" which has followed in the train of Europeans and Americans.

It is a strange and startling fact, that where Christianity and civilization have made most progress, the vice of intemperance and kindred evils are also most prevalent. In many heathen lands drunkenness is unknown, and the inhabitants become acquainted with it only through their intercourse with Christendom and so-called Christian civilization. A Persian missionary informs us, that if a Mohammedan is seen drunk it is a common remark that he has become a Christian. A native of India, applying for a situation, was asked if he were a Christian. Having replied in the negative, he was further asked, *Why not?* He answered: "I see that Christians get drunk; I know that Christians commit adultery; I hear Christians swear, and I am not like that." It is therefore manifest, that great injury is inflicted on the cause of missions to the heathen by the prejudice

thus raised in their minds against a religion, with the profession of which they see so much evil associated.

But this is not all. The Christian being the more civilized, and, in many cases, the dominant race, the natives naturally imitate the example set before them, and learn to use strong drink. Archdeacon Jeffries declared, after thirty-one years experience in India, that "For one really converted Christian as the fruit of missionary labor, the drinking practices of the English have made *one thousand* drunkards. This is a sad thought, but it is the solemn truth. If the English were driven out of India to-morrow, the chief trace of their having been there would be the number of drunkards left behind." An eminent representative of the Hindoo race recently remarked at a meeting in London: "What was India thirty or forty years ago, and what is she to-day? The wailings and the cries of widows and orphans at this moment, methinks, fill the whole horizon of India. The whole atmosphere of India seems to be rending with the cries of poor helpless widows and orphans, who, oftentimes, go the length of cursing the British Government for having introduced this great curse of drink among them."

Thus it is that strong drink has neutralized the efforts of our Christian ministers abroad, and brought great discredit upon the name of our divine Lord and Master. Christians, through drink, have become a by-word and reproach among the heathen. The heathen do not, and it is not to be expected that they should, understand the distinction between those who are Christians in name only, and those who are so in reality. *They* are all heathen, *we* are all Christians—as they judge; and so, when the vices are carried abroad and paraded before them, they naturally associate them with our religion; just as we associate their vices with their religion.

What Christian-professing England has done to the far-off inhabitants of India, Christian-professing America is doing to the American Indian.

It is, therefore, very evident that there is no visible enemy that comes up so boldly, attacks so successfully, and hinders so

unceasingly the Church's work as the use of and traffic in strong drink. At home we find it sadly weakening the Church's strength, stealing away her members, hardening many hearts, making the gospel of none effect, seducing the young, keeping thousands beyond the reach of Christian influence, and creating a threatening mass of the most hardened heathenism and corruption in the very midst of our brightest and most active Christianity. Abroad, in regions alike far remote from us and from each other, we find similar results. The missionary has to contend, not only against the natural foes of the gospel which he finds in possession of the heathen field, but against their powerful ally, strong drink, which professing Christians, actuated by the greed of gain, send forth also to the field of his labors.

Have these facts no voice for Christian people, and for the Christian Church at large? How comes it that whenever we send the gospel to Africa, the South Seas, among the Indians, or elsewhere, strong drink and its attendant evils are likewise sent? *Until our own drinking customs and our own drink traffic are overcome and abandoned at home, they can not be abolished abroad!!*

This brings me to the second point of my purpose, viz: *That it is the duty of the Christian Church to sweep away this arch enemy of God's righteousness.*

Do I hear some of my Christian friends saying, "O! that it were possible!"? My friends, the Church will never be able to cast mountains into the depths of the sea till she is strong in faith. No! The great Master said: "If ye have *faith*, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed, and cast into the depths of the sea;" and faith in regard to this evil must be as strong as that, or we never shall succeed. You ask me, then, "Can this mountain be removed?" I reply: The voice of the Lord saith, "Every valley *shall* be exalted, and every mountain and hill *shall* be made low, and the crooked *shall* be made straight, and the rough places plain." Some of you may not take part in this glorious work through unbelief, but if *you* don't touch this evil, somebody else will; and if you don't enter upon your work in this time, the time of your visitation, then God will raise up

others who will be more worthy of him. You may delay his work, but you can not prevent it. "Every valley *shall* be exalted, and every mountain and hill *shall* be made low, and the crooked places *shall* be made straight, and the rough places plain." Here, then, is our grand foothold. God has decreed that these mountains of evil and sin shall perish. Now, I turn to the Christian Church, and I call upon her to respond to the voice of her great Master, and give herself to the work that is put before her.

First, let me say, unhesitatingly, that the Church *can* remove this mountain of which I am now specially speaking. Look at her merely on her human side, and you will perceive that she is the mightiest organization in existence. Let the Church decree that any evil in this land shall perish, and who can preserve it? Look at her power as a teacher; are not the children of our country in her hands? Is there a village or hamlet where her teaching is not heard? Let her, then, denounce this great cause of evil, and her voice will be listened to, and obeyed!

Then look at the political power which she possesses. Is there an election in which the Christian Church can not turn the balance? We know there is not! There is not a district in this broad land in which she can not decide who shall be the representatives. Let her, then, be loyal to her great Master, and she will speak to Congress and to the various State Legislatures in such terms that, before another decade passes, this accursed traffic will be doomed.

That is the human side of the Church; but there is the divine side. Regarded simply as a human agency, she is mighty; but with her divine character and commission, she is more than mighty—for "God is in the midst of her, and he shall help her." She has not only the ordinary power which men have, but she has omnipotence at her command. She can not only influence Congress and State Legislatures, but she can "*move the arm that moves the world.*" Let her stand up in her strength, and she can not only wrestle with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers; and when she puts forth her strength her enemies must succumb. Let her, then, arise and decree the end of this evil, and in our own day that end shall come.

The Church *must* do this if she would hold her own. There is no neutrality in this warfare. If we are not assailing strong drink, it is assailing us. Look into the Church, and everywhere you will find "Rachel weeping for her children because they are not;" numbers who were in the front of the fight falling into the rear; many who once occupied high places in the Church falling away through this terrible evil.

We have seen men prominent in the Church, at whose feet many have sat in bygone days, dragged down by strong drink, till, with blackened face, they have stood up in the drinking saloon, and there muttered out sermons amidst the laughter, and jeers, and mockery of those by whom they were surrounded. O, yes! if the Church is not attacking the drink, the drink is attacking the Church. *The Church must attack the drink if she would keep her own.* The tide of evil is surging around us. It is sweeping away our friends and kin. *The Church must, if she would please her Master.* Selfish considerations are not to be entertained in this warfare. "Whatsoever ye do," that is the command, "whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God." Our great business is to do HIS will.

It sometimes seems to me that many people join the Church who have very erroneous notions as to what is meant by church fellowship. There are many who seem to think that the Church is a beautiful banqueting house, into which they may enter, and where they may sit, and sing, and dream themselves away into everlasting bliss. This is a great mistake. The Church is an *army*—the *army of the living God*, and the moment a person hears the voice of the Holy Spirit saying, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee," he hears the same voice saying, "Now destroy the works of the devil; try to make earth like heaven, and every man godlike." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." The soldier, remember, is bound to war against every enemy of the commonwealth. And so it is with the soldiers of Christ. I may not pick and choose.

Some of my friends say: "O! we can't assault that enemy; we are very busy with ignorance or heathenism." All right! fight away with these; but remember this, that when a man

enlists, he doesn't bargain that he will fight certain foes only. There is no understanding that he will not fight the French, the German, the English, or the Mexican. Imagine that war was declared with any of these nations, and a certain regiment were to say: "We didn't enlist to fight against *that* enemy!" The thing is absurd! The soldier enlists to fight against every enemy of his government. The soldier of the cross enlists in the same way. He is bound to fight against everything that injures man, or offends God. *He must.* The command has gone forth, and he will not be found faithful if he attempts to shirk his duty in assailing any and all the powers of darkness, as they present themselves.

Some present may ask, How are we to proceed? I answer: First, if you want to battle with intemperance, you must do it by your own personal total abstinence from the drink. Nothing short of this will do. You may preach from the pulpit, or speak from the platform, and you may form your organizations, but if you don't abstain yourselves you never will succeed.

A Christian minister and his curates in the town of Shrewsbury, England, failed to impress the masses with the gospel, despite the entire force of their ecclesiastical machinery. His wife takes up the cause of her blessed Master; and, Bible in hand, goes down to the work—hating total abstinence, and with no love for abstainers. She soon finds, however, that abstinence on the part of the people is essential to her success. Open to the teachings of experience, she impresses its practice upon them. A certain measure of good follows; but soon it becomes apparent that her own example and companionship are required in this matter; and, though going against her original convictions, generously she yields to the demand. The good work then thrives apace. All prejudice and prepossession give way. Self-denial is rewarded by success; and we find this noble woman—a convert to total abstinence through her own personal experience of its working—at length expressing herself thus: "*I could no more now be a Christian and not a total abstainer, than I could be a Christian and a drunkard.*" Her converts, not only to sobriety but to Christianity, she counts by hundreds. And her husband thankfully acknowledges, in great singleness of heart,

"You have solved a problem which I have been years trying to make out—how to get hold of the masses of the people."

We may talk, and work, and legislate till doomsday; but unless we pass a law upon our own lips, depend upon it the enemy will hold us in derision. What do the Scriptures tell us? "Ye are the light of the world." You *can not* ignore this. You are Christ's representatives to those who know you. You, my brothers or sisters, if you go into a house, or company, are Christ's representatives there. There are children at the table with you. They ask: "Is it right to drink?" and they look to you for the answer. Actions speak louder than words. You sometimes say you would not lift up your finger against the total abstinence movement, but it has been well said, that every time you take a glass of wine or beer you lift up five fingers. Your example will be in favor of drinking. Actions, I say again, speak louder than words.

It does no good for me to denounce drink with my lips if I do not denounce it in my practice. My life will always be more influential than my words.

There are not only the children to be preserved, but the fallen to be raised. Here, too, your example will be mighty for good or evil. Will you not avoid strong drink for the sake of those who are suffering?—who have been made, as it were, moral paralytics by the use of strong drink, and who can not fight the battle for themselves? We Christians are those to whom their eyes are turned for help. They say: "If *he* would only have water instead of wine; if he would only stand by my side and help me, I would thank him here, and bless him hereafter." Will you not do it? Will you pass by on the other side, and leave them to perish? O, surely not! Love to God and suffering humanity forbids it. You *will* come to their aid, at least so far as your *example* is concerned; and in that example these weak, heavily stricken ones will find a harbor of refuge.

Personal abstinence is first, then, in the removal of this great stumbling block out of the way of the gospel. But what next? *The entire prohibition of the liquor traffic by law!* Do what you will—form your juvenile temperance bands, establish your va-

rious temperance societies and orders, preach your sermons, employ your most talented lecturers, circulate your temperance tracts by the million, but as long as we have a business licensed by law to produce drunkenness, vice, and crime in our midst, the evil *will* continue. You all remember that most interesting sketch in the "*Pilgrim's Progress*" of the Interpreter's house. Christian went into a room where a fire was burning, and there were men pouring water upon it. But it was of no use, for the fire still burned, in spite of the water poured upon it. Christian wondered, as well he might, at this singular phenomenon. At length, his guide led him round to the other side, and showed him somebody behind pouring oil upon the fire, which had more effect in feeding the flame than the water had in extinguishing it. That is a true description of the traffic in strong drink. We have the fire among us. Our children and our national welfare are being consumed by it. Some of us, for lo! these many years, have been trying to extinguish it. We have used the pulpit, the press, and the platform, and yet this fire has burned the fiercer, and now we have gone behind and found 150,000 persons licensed by law to perpetuate this gigantic curse in our midst. Shall we continue to tolerate this great iniquity? Or will not the Christian Church rise in her might, and, as one grand unit, declare that thus far shalt thou come, but here shall thy waves of destruction and sin be stayed?

They tell us they are licensed by Government. *We say no government has a right to license men to tempt and ruin our children temporally and spiritually.* Don't prate to us about *rights and vested interests.* We have children at home. Who will protect them from these 150,000 saloonkeepers, the direct tendency of whose trade is to blight and curse them here and hereafter? In the name of the fathers and mothers of America we demand the prohibition of this accursed traffic. *We must have it!* Christian people, will you help us? If nothing else will arouse you to political action, with special reference to this great wrong, look at and think of your children. You may be strong, but they are weak. Look at the many victims around you who are powerless against this arch tempter and destroyer. If human sacri-

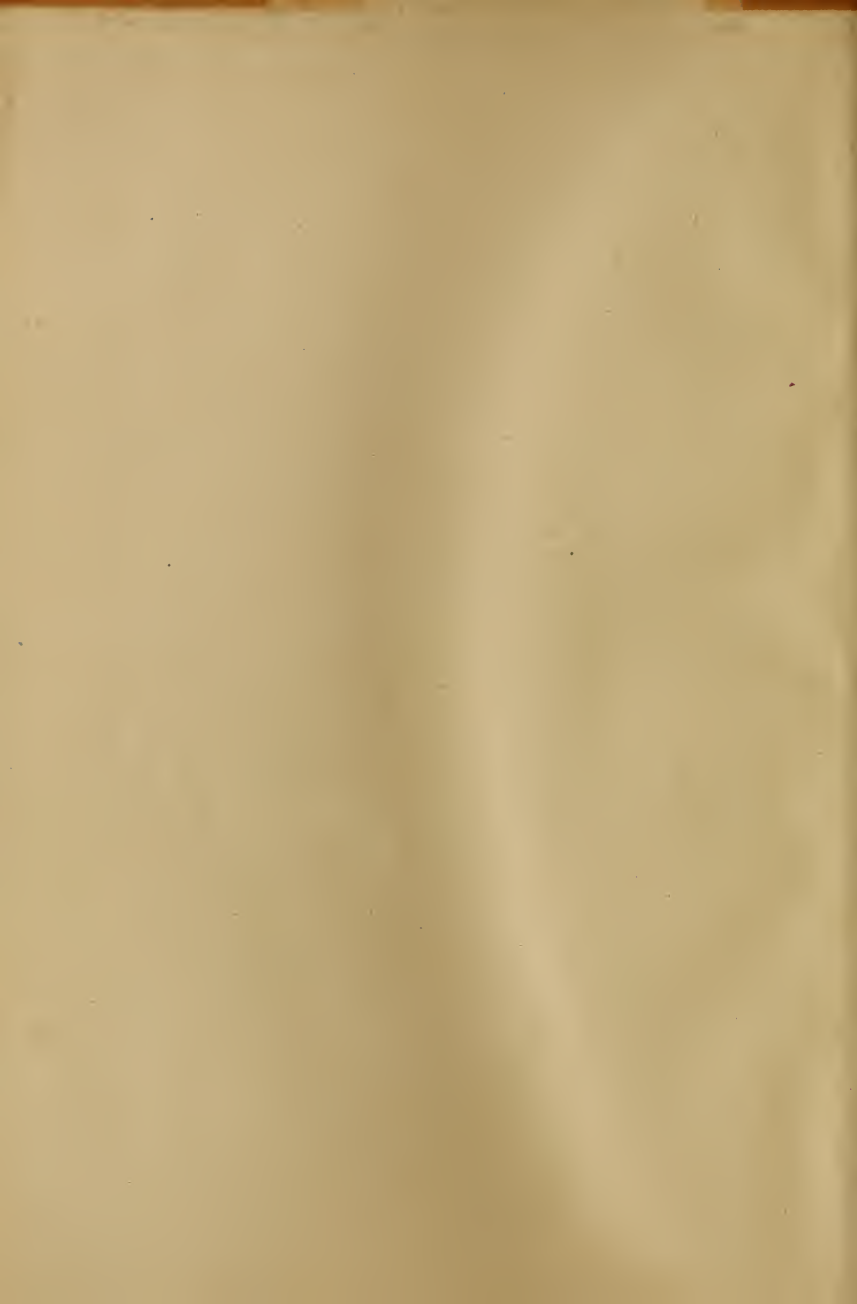
fices were rife in our beloved country ; if certain places were set aside as shambles, where victims by hundreds were laid on the gory altars of a cruel god, you would hate, would you not, with a perfect hatred, the bolted door and the grated window of that horrid place ? You are not human, much less Christian, if your heart does not burn within you for the removal of the grogshop, which has destroyed more lives than all the sacrificial altars of heathendom. Yes ! I say it deliberately, after carefully weighing my words, that the dramshops of our land are such slaughterhouses as displeasing to God, and as murderous to man. Hecatombs of human victims are yearly sacrificed there. Not offered in sacrifice to an idol, you say ? No ! It would be some palliation of the sin if they were. The blind heathen thought that thereby they did God service ; but these modern murderers have not superstition as an excuse. *They do it for filthy lucre's sake.* Men, our own flesh and blood, are lured, drugged, and burned to death in these dens, that other men may make money by the process. I have sometimes stood on the pavement, and looked in at the open door. I have seen almost naked, haggard parents, men and women, standing at the counter. They stood there yesterday, and the day before. They are known as customers.

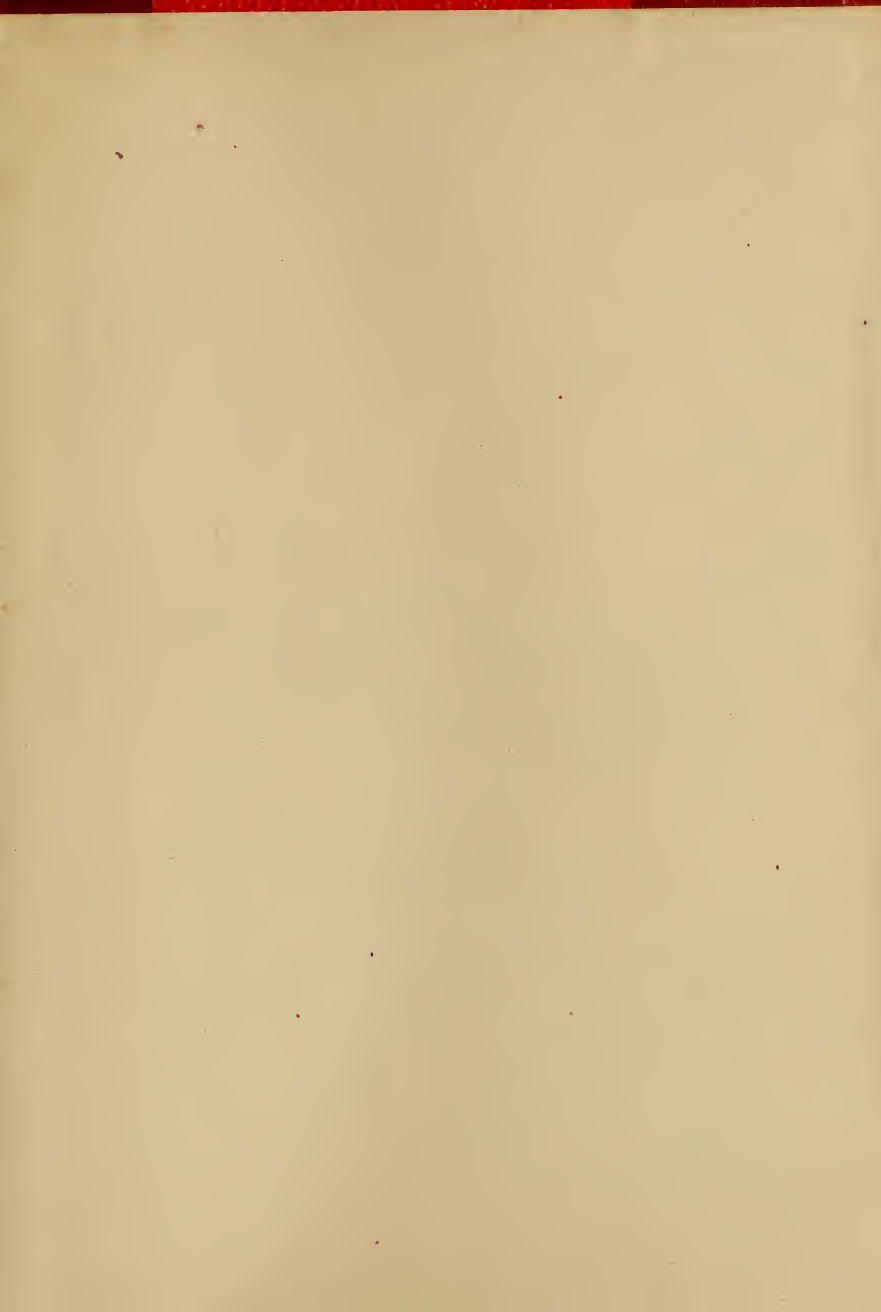
It is also known that what they buy and drink there is eating out their body's life, and bringing wrath upon their souls ; is breaking the hearts of their parents, or casting children, diseased, ignorant, and profligate, upon society. Behind the counter the dealer stands, accredited and licensed by the laws of our land. He has stripped his coat, and is working in his shirt sleeves. He is dealing out the means and material of ruin to his brother man, and taking his money in. My friends, I can not be cool. My head burns and my heart throbs ! That man, stripped, and laboring, and perspiring there, appears to me Moloch's high priest slaughtering the sacrifices. I confess it—I never can pass the saloon with coolness. I hate—God is my witness—I hate the burnished counter, and glittering brass, and glaring light, and painted window—all the accessories of the crime—the garments of the idol—I hate them, for they are spotted with the

blood of men. In compassion, alike for the seller and the buyer, alike for the publican and the drunkard, I plead that an arrest be laid by the mighty hand of the nation upon this cruel, murderous, wicked, law-authorized traffic.

Shall we Christians be anxious about the heathen afar off, and careless and indifferent about the sufferers at home? Reach idolatry, and destroy it if you can; but in God's name, reach the intemperance of America, and sweep it away. The licensed saloon is the great propagator of this evil. Shut the saloon by law, utterly prohibit it, and the great fountain of iniquity will be closed. *The Christian people of this land have the power to do this, and God will hold them responsible for the proper use of this power.* Let every Christian voter resolve, deliberately and prayerfully, as in the presence of Almighty God, that he will cast his vote at all coming elections for such men only as are known to be earnestly in favor of suppressing the liquor traffic, and from that moment it will be doomed. Christian voters did this in regard to slavery, and thereby inaugurated a movement which shook that great wrong to its center. Let the Christian voter be equally faithful in regard to the accursed traffic in drink, and he will ultimately accomplish, through the help of God, one of the greatest physical, political, and moral revolutions the world has ever experienced.

Then, indeed, but *not till then*, not till the grogshop is closed, and the fiery serpent destroyed, "*shall every valley be exalted, and every mountain and hill be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*"





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